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PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS

VOL. 31

FEBRUARY 18, 1916

No. 7

LICENSING OF HAWKERS OF DRUGS.

CALIFORNIA LAW REQUIRING ITINERANT VENDORS OF DRUGS TO PAY A TAX AND SECURE A LICENSE HELD VALID.

A drug peddler was arrested in California and convicted of violating a State law which requires all itinerant vendors of drugs to secure licenses and pay a semiannual State tax of \$100. This tax is in addition to fees or taxes which may be required by county or municipal authorities.

The Supreme Court of the State decided that the law is not in conflict with the Federal Constitution and that it is valid.

The essential parts of the opinions appear in this issue of the Public Health Reports, page 391.

SALE AND USE OF POISONS.

By MARTIN I. WILBERT, Technical Assistant, Division of Pharmacology, Hygienic Laboratory, United States Public Health Service.

The potential influences of poisonous drugs on the morbidity as well as the mortality of those using them are beginning to attract the attention of persons cognizant of the rapid increase in deaths from degenerative diseases that are occurring in the comparatively early periods of life. That potent drugs may have an important action on the metabolic processes has long been recognized, but that their use is as extensive and widespread as it really is has perhaps not been known, or, if known, has not been appreciated.

The problem of adequate legislation for restricting the sale and use of poisons is complicated by the fact that the nature and characteristics of dangerous poisons can not be outlined or defined. The question "what is a poison" continues to elicit discussion and to attract attention on the part of dealers and others engaged in the manufacture, sale, or distribution of poisonous or potent drugs or their preparations, but up to the present time this question has not generally received due attention because of the fact that persons not directly interested, in an economic way, in the manufacture or sale